

# **The Global Youth Tobacco Survey Project**

## ***Preliminary findings from data collected in Costa Rica in 1999***

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### **Introduction**

This paper contains the main findings from the WHO/CDC Global Youth Tobacco Survey Project (GYTS), carried out on young students from 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grades of schools in September-October 1999. The survey was administered by the Research Unit of the National Institute on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (I.A.F.A.).

GYTS is an international surveillance project that generates comparisons of tobacco use between countries with the aim to enhance the capacity of countries to monitor tobacco use and to evaluate preventive programs.

The present report introduces tobacco prevalence, age of onset, minor's access to tobacco, exposure to advertising, smoking cessation, environmental tobacco use and school curriculum. The knowledge and attitudes section will be analyzed in the near future and presented in a separate document.

GYTS project has a tremendous impact not only in Costa Rica but also in Latin American as a whole. This is true because of the extent of young people in the area, the relative weakness of tobacco regulations, where they exists, the poorly developed and disseminated tobacco

messages, the low cigarette prices and the lack of monitoring tobacco use in practically every country of Latin America. Targeting young people with preventive programs against tobacco use, will help to prevent the life-long dependence on nicotine that is associated with several diseases and to reduce the severe economic and social impact related to illness and premature death.

## Methods

### *Sampling procedures*

The sampling frame included 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> graders from regular schools in 1999. Two-stage cluster sample design was used to produce a representative sample of those students. Schools were selected with probability proportional to school enrollment size.

A systematic equal probability sampling of classes from each participating school in the survey was the second stage sampling and all students in the selected classes were eligible to participate in the study.

As in many other countries, in Costa Rica the overall response rate for the GYTS was very high. The response rate of the 62 selected schools was 100% and the student's response rate was 90.4% from the 5114 students selected. A weighting factor was applied to each student record to adjust for non-responses and for the varying probabilities of selection